

The Shepherd

The sun has set to end a summer's day,
The mountain winds are lulling pines to sleep;
And here, where snow-fed waters sing their way,
I'm camping near a shepherd and his sheep.

There's music here which stirs the silent air,
When shy woodpeckers beat on wooden drums;
When chants the hermit thrush its morning prayer,
Or coos the dove when solemn evening comes.

There's moving beauty too, afar and nigh—
In aspen leaves which dance while zephyrs blow;
In clouds of crimson, floating in the sky,
Or willows waving where the streamlets flow.

Now calls the shepherd to his clever dogs;
They're driving noisy sheep to bedding ground;
The frisky lambs leap high o'er fallen logs,
On winding trails where mirror lakes abound.

The tinkle of their bells on wafting breeze,
The bleat of ewes and lambkins near their fold,
The bark of dogs while scouting 'mong the trees,
In blending tones, awake the forests old.

The mother ewes by wondrous gift of scent,
From all the many lambs can find their own;
And in the twilight, when the day is spent,
They nestle down, the young beside the grown.

The dusk is turning grey all colors bright—
The clouds aflame—the brilliant flowers too,
Enrobing them in garments of the night,
As scenes enchanting gently fade from view.

A white-topped wagon looms against the sky,
On yonder hill where oft the shepherd stands,
To guard his sheep from lurking foes near by,
Which in the gloaming prowl the wooded lands.

In that rude camp the shepherd makes his home,
'Mid gardens wild where blooms the columbine;
Where oft on dreamy nights 'neath star-lit dome,
He finds sweet rest near scented groves of pine.

'Tis there when home from ridge or shady brooks,
He bakes his tasty bread of sour dough;
Fries savory bacon, and his mutton cooks,
While coffee simmers o'er the embers' glow.

The health and hunger found in mountain air,
The wine which nature brews in icy springs;
Combine to make his plain and wholesome fare,
A banquet fit for peasants or for kings.

The howl of coyotes from their haunts of old,
Strikes fear in hearts of creatures they would kill;
The watchful dogs take up the challenge bold,
And hurl defiance with their voices shrill.

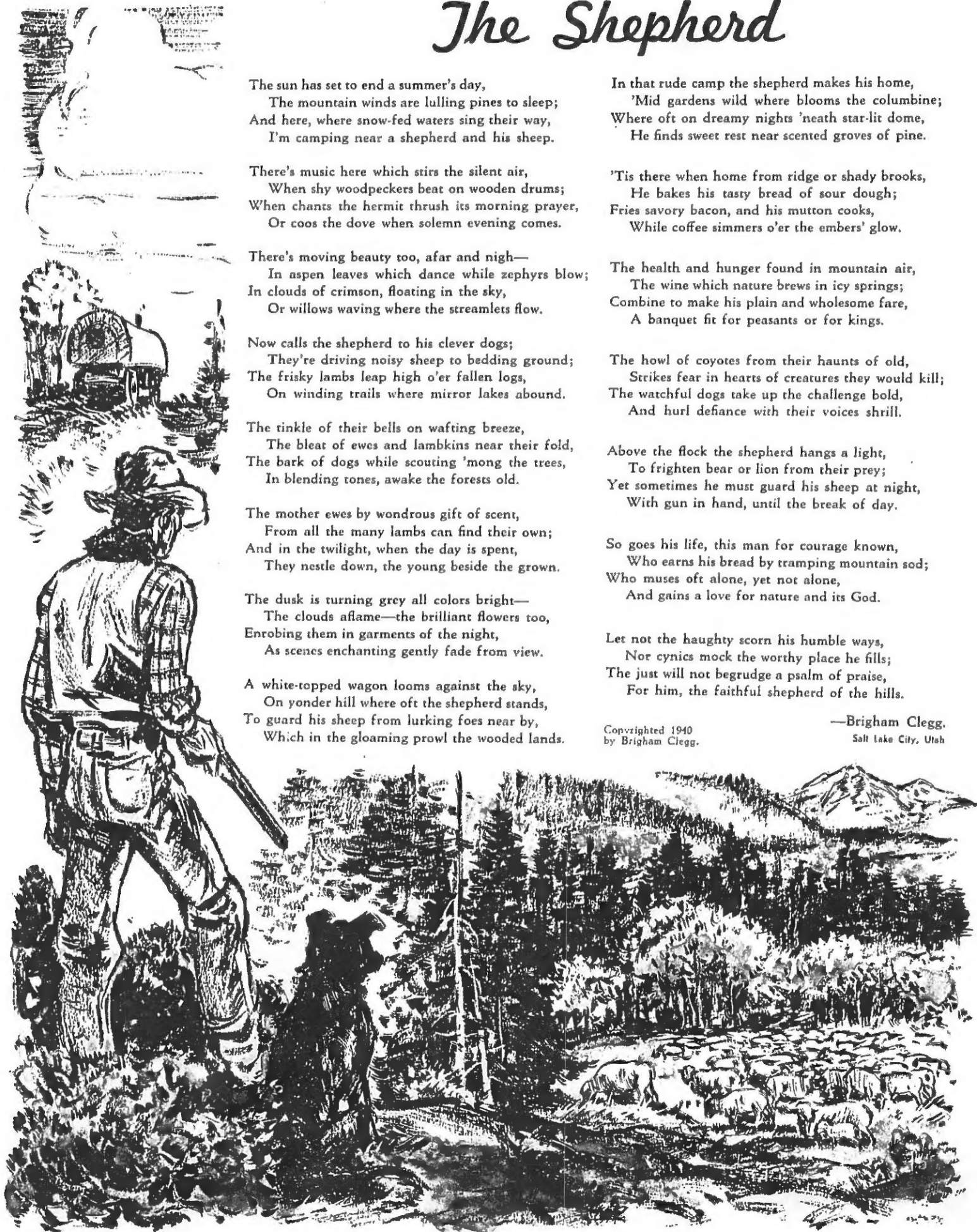
Above the flock the shepherd hangs a light,
To frighten bear or lion from their prey;
Yet sometimes he must guard his sheep at night,
With gun in hand, until the break of day.

So goes his life, this man for courage known,
Who earns his bread by tramping mountain sod;
Who muses oft alone, yet not alone,
And gains a love for nature and its God.

Let not the haughty scorn his humble ways,
Nor cynics mock the worthy place he fills;
The just will not begrudge a psalm of praise,
For him, the faithful shepherd of the hills.

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—Brigham Clegg.
Salt Lake City, Utah



Rounding up the Sheep



a day at 22½¢ each plus his board.

In the older days, he was paid in chips good at any store in any near-by town. He got 9 or 10 cents a sheep, and a dollar a day for his grub.

Being paid every day, he dropped his blades and hid to the nearest saloon to jubilate, swap yarns, and smutty jokes. The real "fellows" of the range were the sheep dogs, often mongrels,

but bred-in-the-purble for sagacity and loyalty. Half of the rounding-up of the herd for night bedding were the trim-timing of the all-knowing canine and the sure-footed sheep camp horse that picked his way along the tricky mountain trails.

An old-time fashion of counting the herd was the black sheep of the flock, so many per hundred to tally the white-fleeced ones. A quick count of the black sheep gave the total number of the flock. If all black sheep were secure, the herder was sure his flock was bedded for the night, and he could "strike the hay," leaving the dogs on guard duty around the herd.

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"Others," Hen E. Christensen

A Utah man, Lator Taylor president of the Sheep Shearers Union of North America, No. 1, says this is the oldest union in the land. For 32 years he won prizes for his annual work as a shearer. We pay tribute to him!

The one type of sheepherder that has won his way into Western life is the Basque from the Pyrenees of Spain — a time-honored race that goes beyond history for its origin. They have always clung to racial traits, language, and ways — honest, industrious, sturdy, and orderly. They react to dancing, the singing of age-old songs of Spain, and the gaiety of their country in Spain, and pelota playing. Their "special spirit" of Northern Spain is not Spanish, but Basque. Their language is Euskara, their native tongue of the ancient city of Guernica near Bilbao. The Basques are the known and respected sheep-herders of all time out West.

The sheep-wagon sometimes with an additional tent has always been the same, the only change is the type of locomotion now used which may be gas engine.